



**May 23rd, 2007**

**Hyatt Regency, Crystal City**

Sponsored by NOAA Program Planning and Integration

Contact: [Strategic.Planning@noaa.gov](mailto:Strategic.Planning@noaa.gov)

## 2007 NOAA Stakeholder Forum: Strategic Outlook and Program Priorities

### **Purpose**

To communicate key aspects of NOAA's strategic outlook and obtain the views of NOAA's stakeholders on the agency's strategic direction and priorities in key thematic areas.

### **Participants**

NOAA's strategic partners and key stakeholder groups.

### **Invited NOAA Leadership**

Including: The Undersecretary of Commerce for Oceans and Atmosphere and NOAA Administrator, Deputy Assistant Secretaries, Deputy Undersecretary, Assistant Administrators and Deputy Assistant Administrators, Goal Team Leads, Regional Team Leads, and others.

### **Approach**

The NOAA Administrator will 1) provide an overview of NOAA's accomplishments and current execution priorities, and 2) review NOAA's strategic outlook and program priorities, introducing four strategic themes that would benefit from stakeholder input:

- Societal demands for climate information services;
- Research and technological challenges to improving extreme weather forecasting and prediction;
- Decision support services for hazard resilient communities, commerce, and transportation; and
- Ecosystem approaches to management in an era of changing mandates and increasing pressure on ocean and coastal resources.

After brief reviews of each theme, stakeholders will have an opportunity to respond and comment on the strategic challenges and potential program priorities in each area. This forum will present an opportunity to network with professional colleagues and NOAA leadership, as well as the chance to add your organization's perspective to the collective voice that will shape the agency's strategic priorities.

# 2007 NOAA Stakeholder Forum

Agenda: May 23, 2007

| Time               | Topic  | Session                       |
|--------------------|--|-------------------------------|
| 7:00 – 8:30 am     | Registration and Breakfast   |                               |
| Throughout the day | <b>NOAA Expo</b><br>Exhibit booths will be available throughout the day for participants to learn about and provide input on NOAA products and services and interact with NOAA staff.  | Interactive                   |
| Throughout the day | <b>Idea Centers</b><br>Displays for each theme area will provide additional information and the opportunity to participate in a real-time survey on strategic questions in each theme.   | Interactive                   |
| 8:30 – 9:30 am     | <b>Remarks from the NOAA Administrator</b><br>NOAA's Administrator will provide an overview of NOAA's priorities and strategic outlook, introducing the forum's theme areas and NOAA's response to emerging regional needs. Following his remarks, participants will have the opportunity for Q&A with the Administrator.    | Plenary                       |
| 9:30 – 10:00 am    | BREAK  |                               |
| 10:00 – 11:30 am   | <b>Panel Discussions</b><br>Each theme will introduce the scope and key questions for which NOAA will benefit from stakeholder perspective. A panel of subject-matter experts will present aspects of each theme and host discussions with participants.   | Concurrent Sessions by Theme* |
| 11:30am – 1:00 pm  | <b>LUNCH</b><br>Visit the <b>Idea Centers</b> for further discussions with Panelists.  |                               |
| 1:00 – 3:00 pm     | <b>Breakout Sessions</b><br>Participants will have the opportunity to address questions posed by NOAA in the Panel Discussions. Providing the unique perspective of their organization and drawing on discussions from earlier in the day, participants will develop recommendations for NOAA's approach to the theme areas. | Concurrent Sessions by Theme* |
| 3:00 – 3:30 pm     | BREAK  |                               |
| 3:30 – 4:30 pm     | <b>Closing Session - Report Outs</b><br>Recommendations developed by participants in the Breakout Sessions will be briefed to NOAA leadership for incorporation in NOAA's strategic planning process.  | Plenary                       |

\* The following theme areas will be the focus of activities at the forum:

**Theme 1** Societal demands for climate information services

**Theme 2** Research and technological challenges to improving extreme weather forecasting and prediction

**Theme 3** Decision support services for hazard resilient communities, commerce, and transportation

**Theme 4** Ecosystem approaches to management in an era of changing mandates and increasing pressure on ocean and coastal resources

# 2007 NOAA Stakeholder Forum

## Theme Scope and Key Questions

### **Societal demands for climate information services**

The mission of NOAA's Climate goal is to understand climate variability and change to enhance society's ability to plan and respond. The outcomes of this goal are to provide decision makers a predictive understanding of the global climate system and for climate-sensitive sectors and the climate-literate public to effectively incorporate NOAA's climate products into their plans and decisions. These outcomes are achieved through implementation of a climate observing system, research to understand key climate processes, improved modeling capabilities, and the translation of research and assessments into usable global and regional climate information services. The ability to enhance regional and local capabilities to manage risk and support sustainable development in the context of a changing and varying climate is a new dimension of climate services. This requires collaboration among national, regional, state, and international institutions involved in climate services.

NOAA's key questions for this theme are likely to include:

1. Are NOAA's priorities and strategies to address the demand for science and information services consistent with your needs related to the regional aspects of climate variability and change?
2. What are the most significant emerging societal demands for climate information services, and what is NOAA's distinct role in responding to those demands?
3. What climate information services should NOAA pursue?
4. What are the major mission-oriented research challenges associated with climate (for example, sea level rise, drought, weather-related extreme events, and ocean acidification), and how can NOAA best address them?
5. How should NOAA assess impact/value of climate monitoring and prediction services it provides?
6. How do you view the collaborative and supporting role of NOAA with state and regional entities?

### **Research and technological challenges to improving extreme weather forecasting and prediction**

NOAA priorities include high impact event forecasts, warnings, and advisories; water information services; aviation weather services; and observation integration and data management. Focus areas within these priorities are hurricane forecasts, severe thunderstorm forecasts, including tornadoes and flash floods, support for Next Generation Air Transportation System (NGATS) and air quality mandates, as well as

increasing the productivity of observation assets through technology development, testing and deployment.

NOAA's key questions for this theme are likely to include:

1. What are some of the possibilities NOAA should consider for observational systems (e.g., satellite, aircraft, buoy), high performance computing, and high resolution models to deliver improved hurricane track and intensity forecasts? How should NOAA balance investments in these key areas?
2. What are some of the possibilities NOAA should consider for observational systems (e.g. dual pol and phased array radars, wind profilers) and information technology to display, compute and communicate improved severe thunderstorm forecasts?
3. What are the most significant emerging societal demands for water resource information services, and what is NOAA's distinct role in responding to those demands?
4. What products should NOAA focus on in support of the Next Generation Air Transportation System (NGATS)?
5. How should NOAA respond to new mandates at local, state, and national levels to address integrated climate-air quality management strategies?

### **Decision support services for hazard resilient communities, commerce, and transportation**

Our communities, commerce, and transportation networks are vulnerable to a variety of hazards. NOAA provides products and services that can be used to mitigate many types of high impact events. Coastal communities, for example, are subject to some of the most extreme threats that nature has to offer: hurricanes, tsunamis, contaminant releases, inundation from rising sea and lake levels, erosion, coastal storms, and associated flooding. With coastal populations expected to grow from 153 million in 2003 to an estimated 160 million in 2008, risks to life, property, and coastal habitats will only increase in the future. Similarly, commercial enterprises and the air, surface and marine transportation networks they depend on to fuel the U.S. economic engine must deal with the same threats, but often on a broader regional or national scale. For example, a high impact weather event in one location may cause a ripple effect across industries and transportation modes nationwide, resulting in gridlock and ultimately higher costs to consumers for goods and services.

NOAA's key questions for this theme are likely to include:

1. How are NOAA's decision support tools used now to mitigate hazards?
2. How can NOAA improve its information, training, tools, and technology to support coastal communities and commerce nationwide with practical hazard mitigation and resilience strategies?

3. What new tools and expertise are needed to make the Nation's communities, commerce and transportation systems more resilient to hazards?
4. What do external partners bring to the table that NOAA can leverage, or vice versa?

### **Ecosystem approaches to management in an era of changing mandates and increasing pressure on ocean and coastal resources**

The ocean, coasts, and Great Lakes generate tremendous natural, economic, social, and cultural benefits and opportunities. These resources are subject to many pressures, for example increasing coastal population and development and increasing demand for seafood. In response, mandates are changing to address existing and emerging threats to ocean and coastal health and productivity. NOAA is responsible for stewardship of ocean and coastal resources, including managing fisheries, protecting and recovering vulnerable species, and monitoring, managing, and protecting marine and coastal habitats for long-term sustainability. NOAA is committed to protecting, restoring, and managing ocean and coastal resources through an ecosystem approach to management that balances ecological, social, and economic objectives. This approach requires increased understanding of these complex systems and improved integration and collaboration in their management.

In the context of ecosystem approaches to management, NOAA's key questions are likely to include:

1. How can NOAA improve the effectiveness of coastal science and management?
2. How can NOAA improve the effectiveness of living marine resource science and management?
3. What mechanisms (e.g., research tools, regional partnerships, outreach) can NOAA use (or better use) to integrate its missions?